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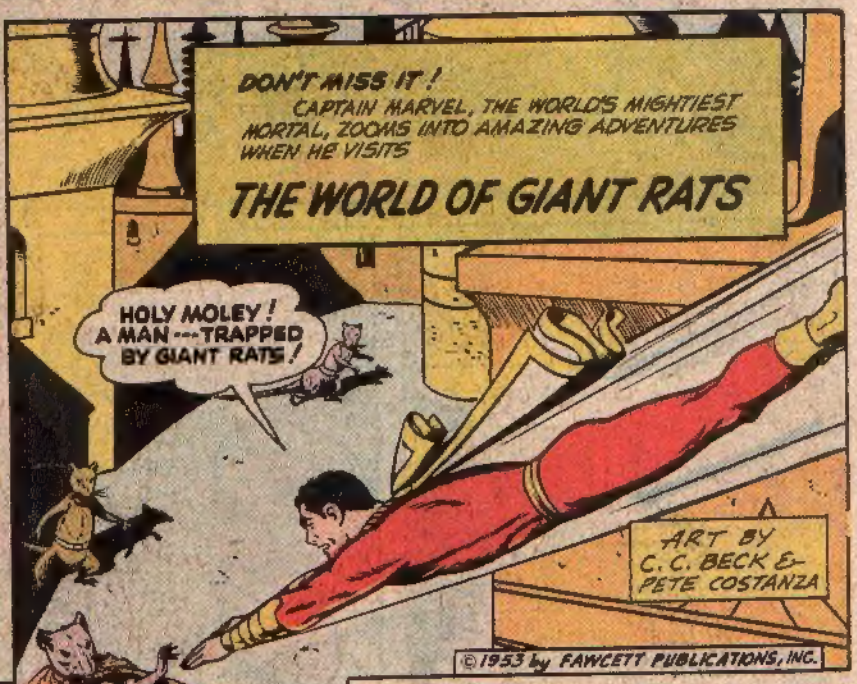
DON'T MISS IT!
CAPTAIN MARVEL, THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL, ZOOMS INTO AMAZING ADVENTURES WHEN HE VISITS
THE WORLD OF GIANT RATS
HOLY MOLEY! A MAN---TRAPPED BY GIANT RATS!
ART BY C. C. BECK & PETE COSTANZA

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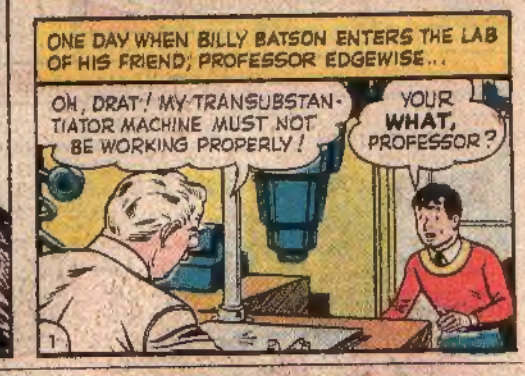
ONE DAY WHEN BILLY BATSON ENTERS THE LAB OF HIS FRIEND, PROFESSOR EDGEWISE...
OH, DRAT! MY TRANSUBSTANTIATOR MACHINE MUST NOT BE WORKING PROPERLY!
YOUR WHAT, PROFESSOR?

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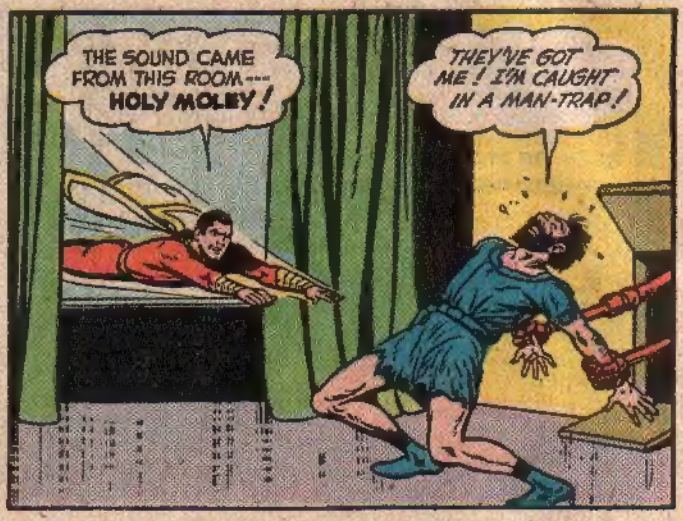
SHAZAM!

I'VE INVENTED A MACHINE FOR SENDING OBJECTS INTO THE DISTANT FUTURE / IT TRANSLATES THINGS INTO THEIR COMPONENT ELECTRONIC CHARGES, WHICH THEN REASSEMBLE ACROSS THE CURVATURE OF TIME!
ER... I SEE!
I SENT THIS SLAB OF WET CONCRETE INTO THE FUTURE, HOPING TO PICK UP FOOTPRINTS OF FUTURE MEN! BUT LOOK WHAT CAME BACK!
PAW PRINTS --- TRACKS OF SOME HUGE RODENT!
EXACTLY! EVERY TIME I'VE SENT THE SLAB INTO THE FUTURE, THIS IS ALL I GET BACK... GIANT RAT TRACKS! NO HUMAN FOOTPRINTS!
I CHOSE A LOCATION WHICH IS ALMOST CERTAINLY A BIG CITY... EVEN IN THE DISTANT FUTURE / I JUST CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT!
HOLY MOLEY! SHAZAM!
THE OLD SORCERER SHAZAM HAS GIVEN BILLY THE POWER TO CHANGE INTO THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MAN SIMPLY BY REPEATING HIS NAME! INSTANTLY MAGIC LIGHTNING FLASHES DOWN, AND...
BOOM
...BILLY BECOMES MIGHTY CAPTAIN MARVEL!
MAYBE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET HUMAN FOOTPRINTS FROM THE FUTURE, PROFESSOR, BECAUSE THERE AREN'T ANY HUMAN BEINGS!
DEAR ME? CAN MANKIND HAVE CEASED TO EXIST BY THE YEAR 81,958?
I HOPE NOT! IF MAN HAS REALLY CEASED TO EXIST IN THAT FUTURE TIME, IT WOULD MEAN THAT ALL MAN'S EFFORTS IN THE PRESENT ARE DOOMED TO FRUSTRATION! I'VE GOT TO FIND OUT!

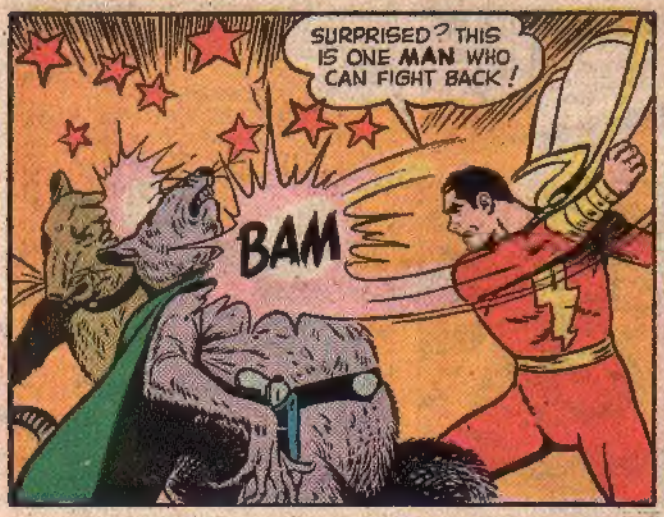
THE WORLD OF GIANT RATS

SWIFTLY ACCELERATING TO A SPEED FASTER THAN LIGHT, CAPTAIN MARVEL BREAKS THROUGH THE BOUNDARIES OF SPACE AND TIME TO THE ROCK OF ETERNITY.
THIS IS WHERE ALL TIME LINES MERGE / NOW I'LL CHOOSE THE RIGHT ONE...
...AND FOLLOW IT TO THE YEAR 81,952 /
A FUTURE CITY / THAT PROVES CIVILIZATION STILL EXISTS, AT ANY RATE /
BUT WHEN THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MAN DESCENDS TO THE CITY OF THE FUTURE, HE SEES AN AMAZING SCENE /
HOLY MOLEY / GIANT RATS--- WALKING AROUND LIKE MEN /
IN ALL THE BUSY, BUSTLING CITY OF THE FUTURE, THERE IS NO SIGN OF A HUMAN BEING /
NO WONDER PROFESSOR EDGEWISE BROUGHT BACK ONLY PAW PRINTS / THE RATS HAVE TAKEN OVER THE WORLD /



A POWERFUL BLOW FROM CAPTAIN MARVEL'S FIST DEMOLISHES THE MAN-TRAP!
NOW I'VE SEEN EVERYTHING! WHO SET UP THIS DIABOLICAL DEVICE?
SMASH
THE RATS, OF COURSE!

I CREPT IN HERE TO PLANT AN EXPLOSIVE TO BLOW UP THE RAT WHO LIVES HERE! I CUT THROUGH THE WALL WITH MY FIRE-TORCH, BUT I RAN STRAIGHT INTO ONE OF THEIR TRAPS!
YOU MEAN THE RATS DELIBERATELY CAPTURE HUMAN BEINGS THIS WAY?



THERE'LL BE OTHERS COMING SOON! WHEN A TRAP IS SPRUNG, IT SETS OFF A GENERAL ALARM! OUR ONLY ESCAPE IS THE SAME WAY I CAME!
LET'S GO!

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.

WHAT TO SINK YOUR TEETH INTO WHEN YOU'RE HUNGRY AND YOU'RE NOT A WEREWOLF.

Every now and then, do you get this uncontrollable urge to bite into something that's really got some meat in it?

Are you tired of sugar-sweet snacks that dissolve in your mouth, and crunchy snacks that you can hardly tell you ate, and all the other boring stuff you have to put up with, every day?

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You might want to carry a few extra ones, too. Then, if you meet a werewolf, you can give him something to sink his teeth into instead of you.

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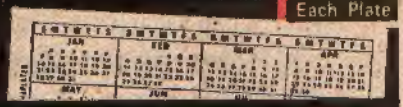

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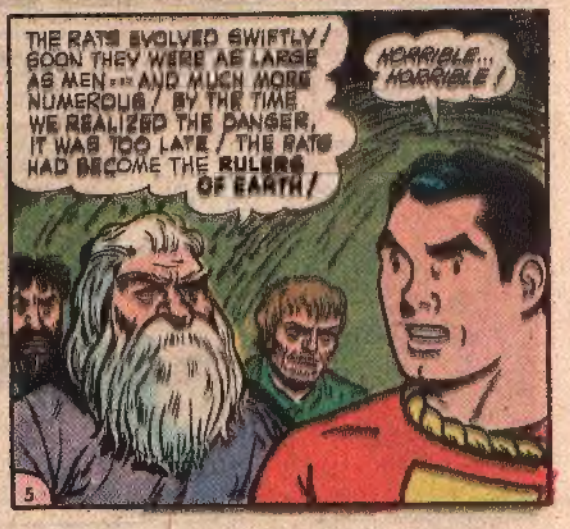
THE WORLD OF GIANT RATS

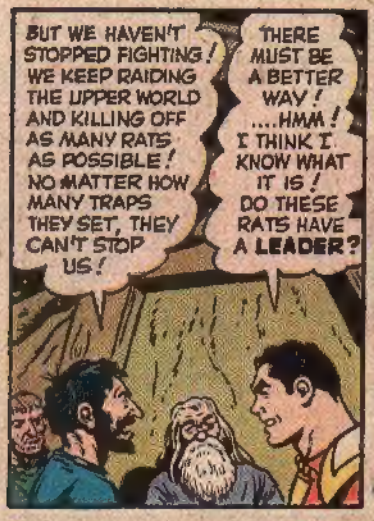
DOWN INTO AN INTRICATE NETWORK OF TUNNELS GOES THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL!
WHAT A WEIRD PLACE!
THESE TUNNELS RUN UNDER THE WHOLE CITY!

AT LAST, AFTER THREADING THEIR WAY THROUGH A MAZE OF UNDERGROUND PASSAGEWAYS...
HERE IS OUR SECRET HIDE-OUT!
GOLLY! IN THIS FUTURE WORLD MEN HIDE UNDERGROUND, WHILE RATS LIVE IN THE OPEN!

INSIDE, CAPTAIN MARVEL MEETS OTHER RAGGED MEMBERS OF THE UNDERGROUND OF THE FUTURE!
HOW DID THIS HAPPEN? HOW DID THE RATS GET THE UPPER HAND?
IT HAPPENED THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO! MEN LEARNED HOW TO TRAVEL IN SPACE! MASS EMIGRATION BEGAN!

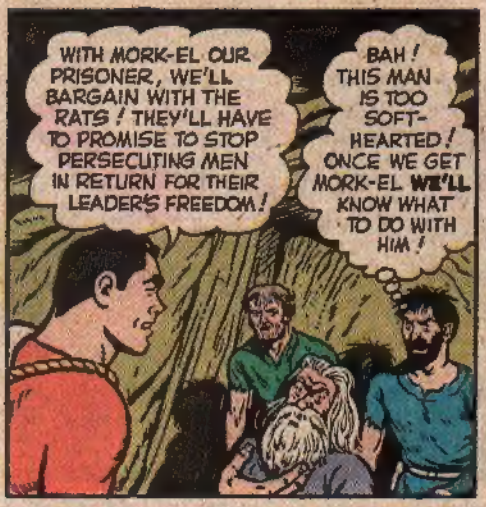
THEN CAME ANOTHER ICE AGE! SNOW AND COLD WERE EVERYWHERE, AND THE RATS PROVED MORE ABLE TO COPE WITH THE CLIMATE THAN MEN! YEAR BY YEAR THEY GREW BOLDER, BIGGER, MORE CLEVER!
STEALING MY FOOD, EH? TAKE THAT!
BANG

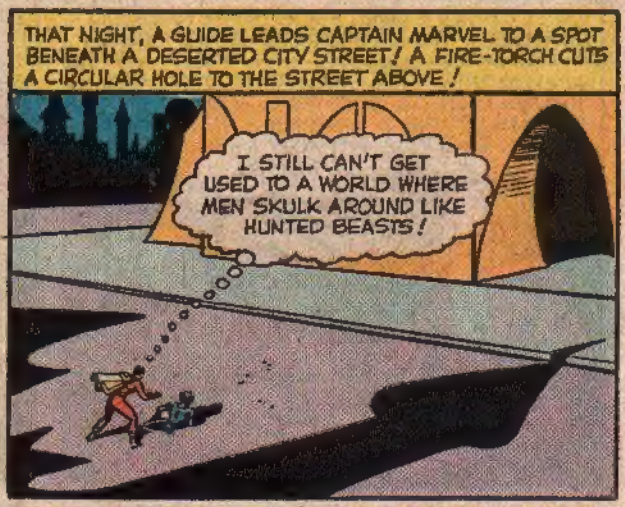

THE RATS EVOLVED SWIFTLY! SOON THEY WERE AS LARGE AS MEN... AND MUCH MORE NUMEROUS! BY THE TIME WE REALIZED THE DANGER, IT WAS TOO LATE! THE RATS HAD BECOME THE RULERS OF EARTH!
HORRIBLE... HORRIBLE!

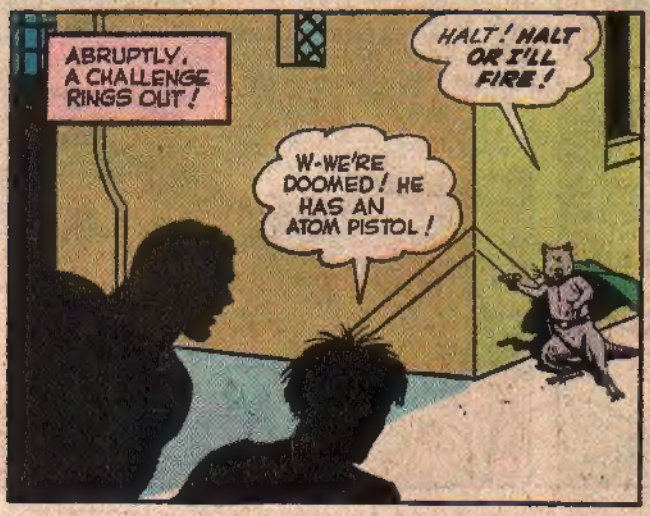

BUT WE HAVEN'T STOPPED FIGHTING! WE KEEP RAIDING THE UPPER WORLD AND KILLING OFF AS MANY RATS AS POSSIBLE! NO MATTER HOW MANY TRAPS THEY SET, THEY CAN'T STOP US!
THERE MUST BE A BETTER WAY! ....HMM! I THINK I KNOW WHAT IT IS! DO THESE RATS HAVE A LEADER?

YES---THE NAME OF THEIR LEADER IS MORK-EL! HE'S A TYRANT, WHO TORTURES HUMANS! IF WE COULD JUST GET HIM...
PERHAPS WE CAN! I INTEND TO CAPTURE HIM!

GREAT! WE'LL TORTURE HIM---THEN WE'LL SKIN HIM ALIVE AND HANG HIS BODY WHERE ALL HIS FOLLOWERS CAN SEE IT!
YOU MUSN'T TALK LIKE THAT! AFTER ALL, WE'RE MEN---AND WE CAN'T STOOP TO USE THEIR METHODS!


WITH MORK-EL OUR PRISONER, WE'LL BARGAIN WITH THE RATS! THEY'LL HAVE TO PROMISE TO STOP PERSECUTING MEN IN RETURN FOR THEIR LEADER'S FREEDOM!
BAH! THIS MAN IS TOO SOFT-HEARTED! ONCE WE GET MORK-EL WE'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH HIM!


THAT NIGHT, A GUIDE LEADS CAPTAIN MARVEL TO A SPOT BENEATH A DESERTED CITY STREET! A FIRE-TORCH CUTS A CIRCULAR HOLE TO THE STREET ABOVE!
I STILL CAN'T GET USED TO A WORLD WHERE MEN SKULK AROUND LIKE HUNTED BEASTS!


ABRUPTLY, A CHALLENGE RINGS OUT!
HALT! HALT OR I'LL FIRE!
W-WE'RE DOOMED! HE HAS AN ATOM PISTOL!

WE CAN STILL ESCAPE!
N-NO! HE'LL BLOW US TO BITS! OHHHHH!

THE WORLD OF GIANT RATS

AS CAPTAIN MARVEL STREAKS SKYWARD, A SMALL BUT INTENSELY POWERFUL EXPLOSION SHATTERS THE AIR BEHIND THEM !

WOW!

WHAP

SECONDS LATER, THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MAN AND HIS COMPANION ARE OUT OF RANGE OF THE DEADLY ATOM PISTOL !

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HOW THAT RAT MISSED US AT SUCH CLOSE RANGE !

NEITHER CAN I--- UNLESS HE **WANTED** TO MISS US !

BUT WHY WOULD A RAT WANT TO SPARE US ? CERTAINLY THE RATS MUST HATE MEN AS MUCH AS THE MEN HATE **THEM** !

THERE'S MORK-EL'S PLACE NOW ! BETTER BE CAREFUL ! IT'S GUARDED WITH ALL KINDS OF MAN-TRAPS !

HEEDLESS OF DANGER, CAPTAIN MARVEL CRASHES THROUGH THE ROOF SKYLIGHT !

CRASH

HOLY MOLEY!

A LIGHTNING TRAP ! UHHHHH !

CRACKLE

THE THUNDEROUS BLAST OF LIGHTNING CHANGES THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MAN BACK TO BILLY BATSON, WHO FALLS HELPLESSLY TO THE FLOOR !

UMPH!

CLUNK

CLUNK

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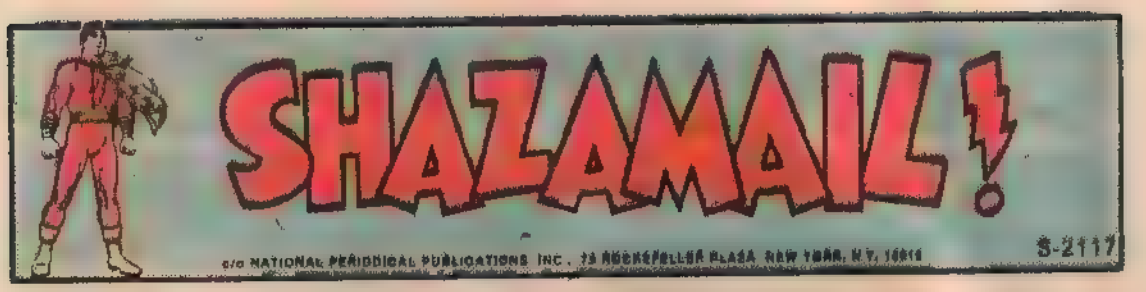

Dear Julie.

I went out to get the mail today after looking over my back issues of **Shazam** and wondering when the next ish would come out. Well, I opened the mailbox and found a magazine wrapped in brown paper. I noticed smoke on part of the cover that was sticking out, and I thought, "Great! It must be **Shazam!**" When the wrapper was pulled off, I was stunned. Seeing "**Shazam!** It's time for the **World's Mightiest Villain!**" and that bright, beautiful costume, the first thing that popped into my head was **Professor Zoom, the Reverse Flash.** Why? Well, it's obvious — the reversed costume and color scheme.

Mr. Elliot Maggin, you have done the best story of your life in **Shazam#19** ("Who Stole Billy Batson's Thunder?"). It would have been nice to see Billy a little more, but that might have upset the story.

Great Gloop! A spanking! Ridiculous! But that's what **Shazam** is all about, as many people have said.

Three cheers for Mr. Bridwell on writing "Secret of the Smiling Swordsman." I was glad to see **Mary** have the responsibility of **Uncle Marvel**, as in the old days. And seeing her dash around invisibly reminded me of the way **Superman** used to help **Hocus and Pocus**, the magicians.

Great Aunt Lizzy! Absurd! Dumb! Infantile! But I love it! Pure escapism!

Mickey McConnell, Richmond, Va.

(Most readers seem to have liked the lead story in #19 — though some did have reservations. There will now be a one-minute pause for Indian jokes! — E.N.B.)

* * * * *

Dear Edward:

Some writers have their off days (or weeks or months, or whatever it takes to produce a story). Elliot Maggin has his on days, however. "Who Stole Billy Batson's Thunder" was one such occasion — and probably the best thing he has done since "Make Way for Captain Thunder!"

I enjoyed the story, partially because it is based on some of my favorite themes (although not one I'd care to see used too often), a variation in either the magic lightning, the words, or the recipient. Though hardly a classic, it is still far superior to the usual Maggin farce, even though the villain did tend to remind me a little too much of **Mr. Mxyzptlk.**

Not that the story was without its defects. One was the way **Captain Marvel** stops the crooks. In the Golden Age, he did it in rather a simple, direct fashion, not in the flamboyant style Maggin ascribes to him. Using a lamppost does not fit **Cap's** style.

Another defect was the characterization, particularly when **Zazzo** referred to himself as "just a bratty kid." How many bratty kids recognize themselves as such? Elliot should have used a caption, or let it go till **Zazzo's** father appeared. (And I'm glad to see that somebody still believes in corporal punishment, too!)

One other fault lay in **Zazzo's** extra-dimensional origin. From the devices he used, one must conclude he had enough to give **CM** a rough time even without stealing the **Shazam** powers.

Oh, well — I did enjoy the story. And Schaffenberger's art did much to enhance it.

Your **Mary-Uncle** story was okay: nothing great, nothing really bad. In comparison with other **Marvels**, I get the least excited over **Mary**, and I don't normally care for **Uncle** at all. But the story was still okay.

By the way, I liked the way Elliot worked **Freddy** and **Junior** into the lead story in an effective, non-contrived fashion.

John Pierce, Columbus, Ohio

(Back in the Golden Age, CAP was not averse to an occasional burst of flamboyance — like the time SIVANA was on a train, and CM built a track for it that led right into the prison yard! — E.N.B.)

* * * * *

Dear Editor!

The great **Zazzo-Plus** is in keeping with the **Captain Marvel** tradition. Flavor-wise, I should say. Actually, **Zazzo** is a mixture of **Mxyzptlk**, the **Reverse-Flash** and **Black Adam**. His pranks are pure **Mxyzptlk**, as well as his origin and personality. His costume and its colors—**Reverse-Flash**. His powers—**Black Adam**.

Here we have that ultimate, corny, lovable repeated **Captain Marvel** cliche — Billy unable to say his magic word. How many times has Billy Batson said "**Shaz** — ugg!" as a gag was slipped over his mouth? **Wonderful!** And this time it was done ten times better!

Adam Castro, New Rochelle, N.Y.

(Before signing off, note that this issue we have two reprints from the Golden Age, "The World of Giant Rats" comes from CAPTAIN MARVEL ADVENTURES #145, June, 1952; while "The City in the Mirage" was first published in CAPTAIN MARVEL JR. #106, Feb., 1952. And looking back at critic John Pierce — do you have to show off just because you know the first name of — E. NELSON BRIDWELL?)

SHAZAM!
THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL FIGHTS THE...
MINERVA MENACE!
AUNT MINERVA, LEADING LADY OF THE UNDERWORLD, HATCHES A PLOT TO DOMINATE THE WORLD OF THE FUTURE!
IF THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD RESTS WITH THE CHILDREN, I'LL CONTROL THE CHILDREN!
GREAT IDEA, BUT HOW?
SHUT UP AND LISTEN!
I'LL USE MY MIND CONTROL MACHINE TO CONFUSE THEIR MINDS. WE'LL CAPTURE THE TV STATION AND BROADCAST "CONTROLLED THOUGHTS"! I'LL CONVINCE THEM THAT WHAT THEY LIKE THEY DON'T REALLY LIKE!
BRILLIANT THINKING, AUNT MINERVA!
AUNT MINERVA'S HENCHMEN CAPTURE BILLY BATSON
MINERVA QUICKLY BEGINS OPERATION "BIG LIE."
YOU DON'T LIKE HOSTESS TWINKIES!
YOU DON'T LIKE HOSTESS TWINKIES!
I DON'T LIKE HOSTESS TWINKIES!
I DON'T LIKE HOSTESS TWINKIES!
WE'VE GOT TO DECONTROL THE CHILDREN'S MINDS AND LET THEM SAY WHAT THEY REALLY MEAN!
SHAZAM!
AT THE SOUND OF THE MAGIC WORD MYSTIC LIGHTNING STRIKES AGAIN!
THINK FOR YOURSELVES AGAIN, KIDS!
WHAT AM I SAYING? I LOVE HOSTESS TWINKIES!
GOLDEN SPONGE CAKE WITH CREAMY FILLING INSIDE!! WHAT COULD BE MORE DELICIOUS THAN TWINKIES?
Twinkies
THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL HAS BEATEN ME AGAIN!
YOU SHOULDA BRAINWASHED THE KIDS ABOUT SOMETHING OTHER THAN TWINKIES
STUDIO 8
YEAH, AUNT MINERVA, KIDS LIKE TWINKIES TOO MUCH TO BE FOOLED!
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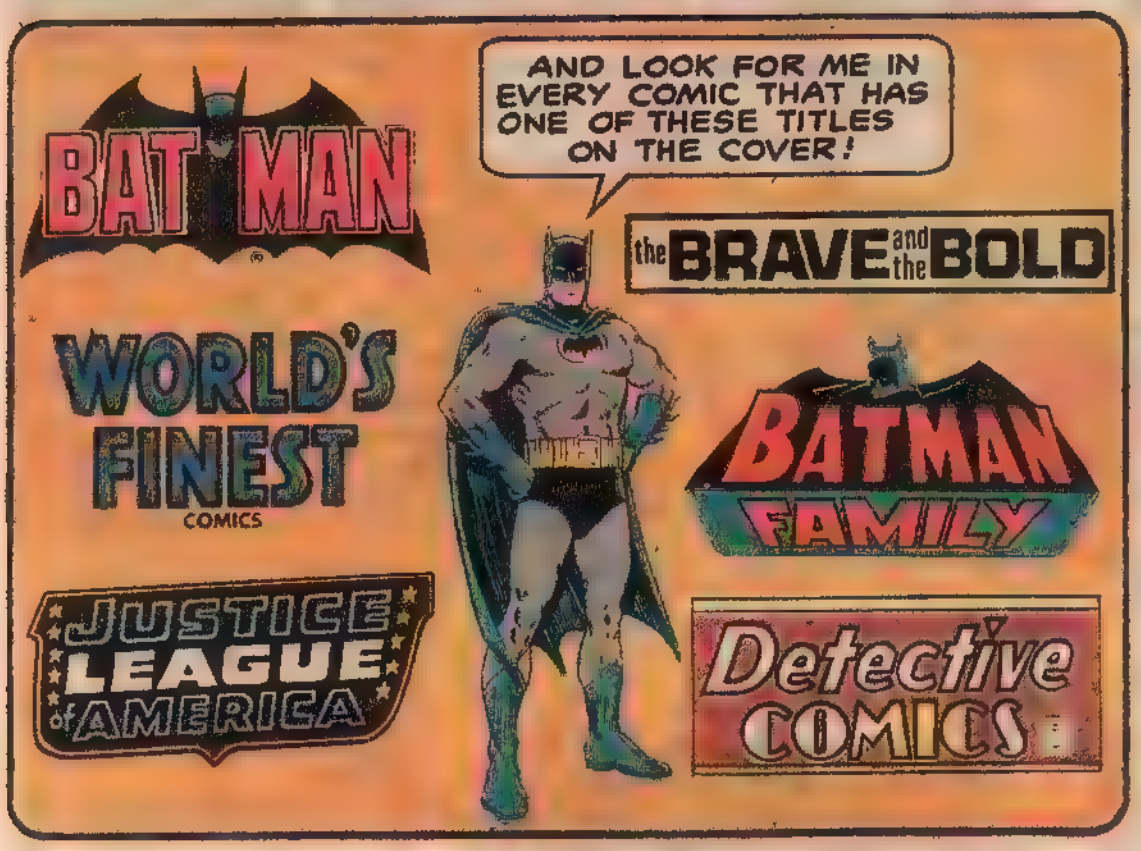
AND LOOK FOR ME IN EVERY COMIC THAT HAS ONE OF THESE TITLES ON THE COVER!
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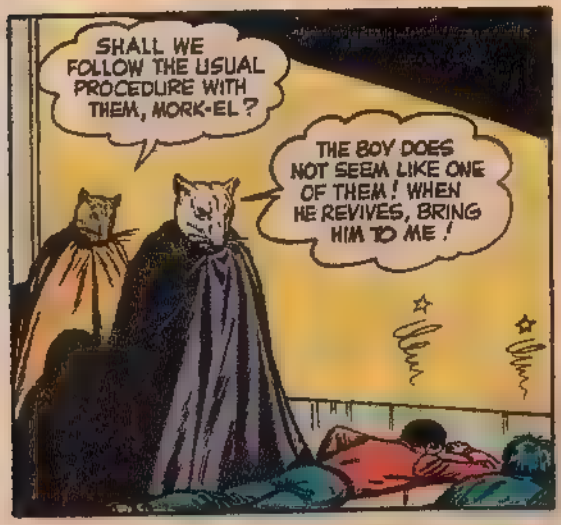
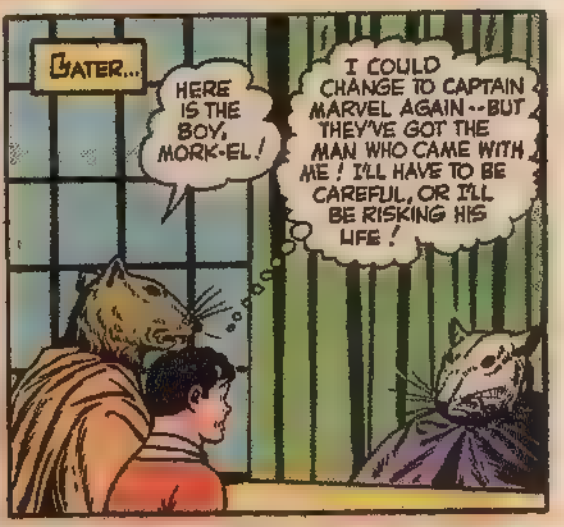
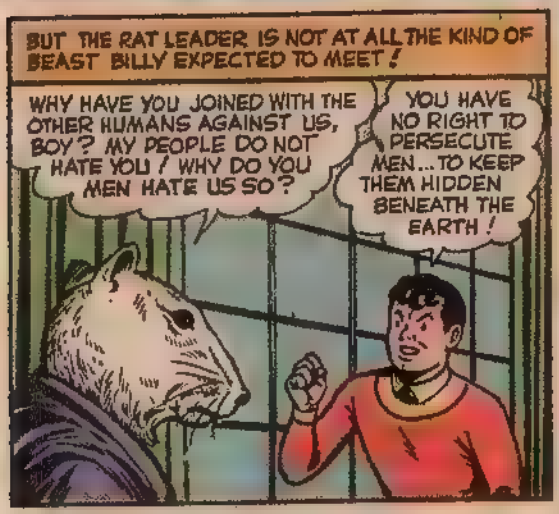
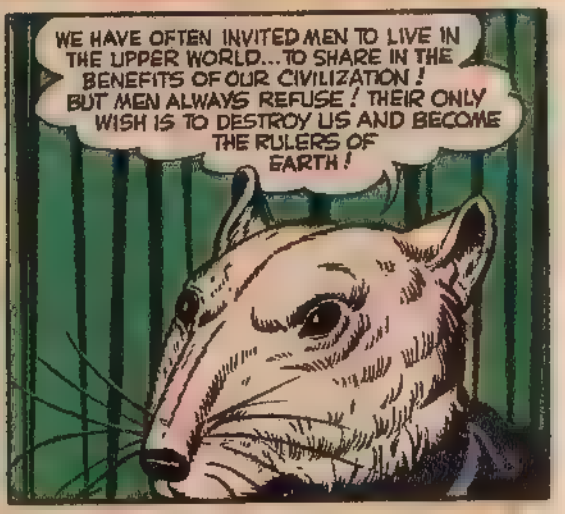
JUSTICE LEAGUE of AMERICA
the BRAVE and the BOLD
BATMAN FAMILY
Detective COMICS

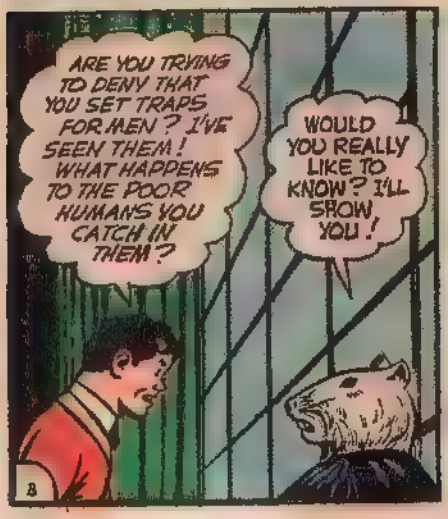
THE WORLD OF GIANT RATS

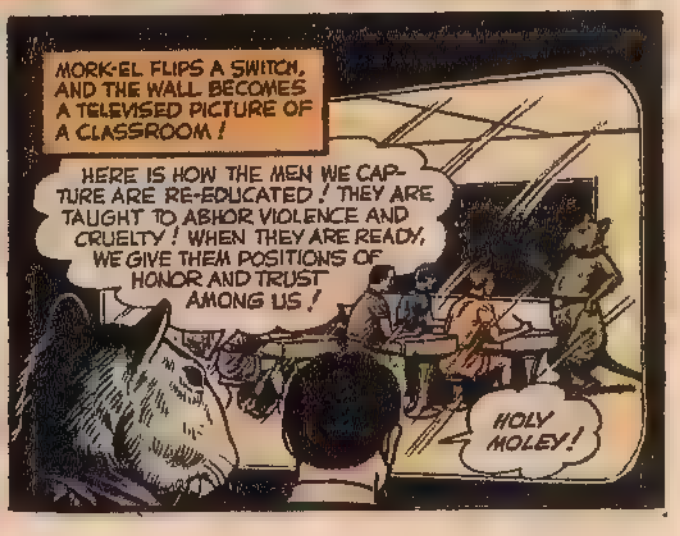



LATER...
HERE IS THE BOY, MORK-EL!
I COULD CHANGE TO CAPTAIN MARVEL AGAIN--BUT THEY'VE GOT THE MAN WHO CAME WITH ME! I'LL HAVE TO BE CAREFUL, OR I'LL BE RISKING HIS LIFE!


BUT THE RAT LEADER IS NOT AT ALL THE KIND OF BEAST BILLY EXPECTED TO MEET!
WHY HAVE YOU JOINED WITH THE OTHER HUMANS AGAINST US, BOY? MY PEOPLE DO NOT HATE YOU! WHY DO YOU MEN HATE US SO?
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO PERSECUTE MEN...TO KEEP THEM HIDDEN BENEATH THE EARTH!


WE HAVE OFTEN INVITED MEN TO LIVE IN THE UPPER WORLD...TO SHARE IN THE BENEFITS OF OUR CIVILIZATION! BUT MEN ALWAYS REFUSE! THEIR ONLY WISH IS TO DESTROY US AND BECOME THE RULERS OF EARTH!


ARE YOU TRYING TO DENY THAT YOU SET TRAPS FOR MEN? I'VE SEEN THEM! WHAT HAPPENS TO THE POOR HUMANS YOU CATCH IN THEM?
WOULD YOU REALLY LIKE TO KNOW? I'LL SHOW YOU!
8


MORK-EL FLIPS A SWITCH, AND THE WALL BECOMES A TELEVISED PICTURE OF A CLASSROOM!
HERE IS HOW THE MEN WE CAPTURE ARE RE-EDUCATED! THEY ARE TAUGHT TO ABHOR VIOLENCE AND CRUELTY! WHEN THEY ARE READY, WE GIVE THEM POSITIONS OF HONOR AND TRUST AMONG US!
HOLY MOLEY!

SHAZAM!

WE WOULD NOT SET THE TRAPS, IF IT WERE NOT FOR MEN ALWAYS TRYING TO KILL US! THE TRAPS ARE OUR ONLY MEANS OF DEFENSE!
IF WHAT MORK-EL SAYS IS TRUE, THEN THE RATS ARE REALLY GOOD, AND THE MEN ARE BAD!
ABRUPTLY...
OUR PRISONER ESCAPED, MORK-EL! HE KILLED A GUARD, AND STOLE THE NITROGEN SHELL FROM OUR ARSENAL!
THE NITROGEN SHELL? THAT'S A WEAPON TOO HORRIBLE TO CONTEMPLATE!
OUR SCIENTISTS INVENTED THE NITROGEN SHELL! BUT WE LOCKED IT AWAY, SO NO ONE WOULD EVER USE IT! IT--IT COULD WIPE OUT THE WORLD IN A SINGLE MIGHTY BLAST!
HOLY MOLEY! SHAZAM!
THE MAGIC WORD, AND ONCE AGAIN MAGIC LIGHTNING SUMMONS CAPTAIN MARVEL!
BOOM
A FLYING MAN!
MEN MUSN'T BE ALLOWED TO SET OFF THE NITROGEN SHELL! I HOPE I'M IN TIME TO STOP THEM!
WHIZZING DOWN TO THE SECRET HIDE-OUT FAR BELOW THE SURFACE, CAPTAIN MARVEL ARRIVES TO SEE...
SET IT OFF NOW! WE CAN GET AWAY BEFORE THE EXPLOSION COMES!
CRASH
YOU WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE!
TOO LATE! WE SET THE FIRING MECHANISM TO GO OFF IN A FEW MORE SECONDS. NOTHING CAN STOP IT!
ONLY ONE THING LEFT TO DO...
SPEEDING TO THE SURFACE, THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MAN HURLS THE DEADLY WEAPON OF DESTRUCTION FAR INTO SPACE, WHERE IT FLAMES IN AN EXPLOSION AS BRIGHT AS THE SUN!
BOOM
HOLY MOLEY! MORK-EL WASN'T FOOLING WHEN HE SAID THAT SHELL COULD HAVE WIPED OUT THE EARTH!
CONCLUDED ON 5TH PAGE FOLLOWING

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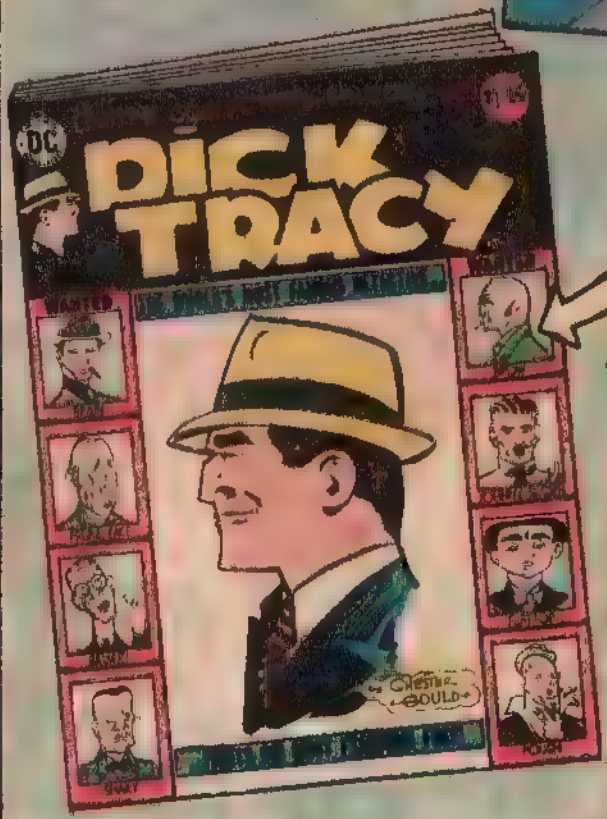

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NEW! A SUPER

WHEREVER HE GOES!

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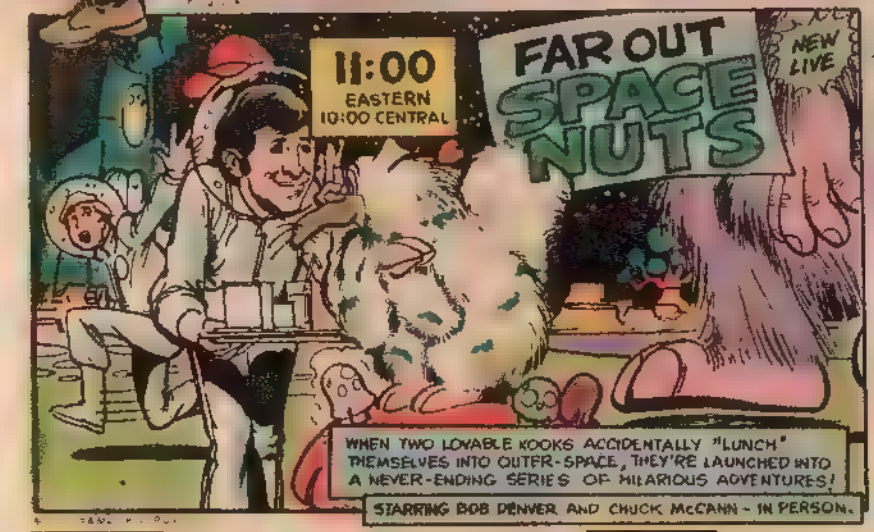

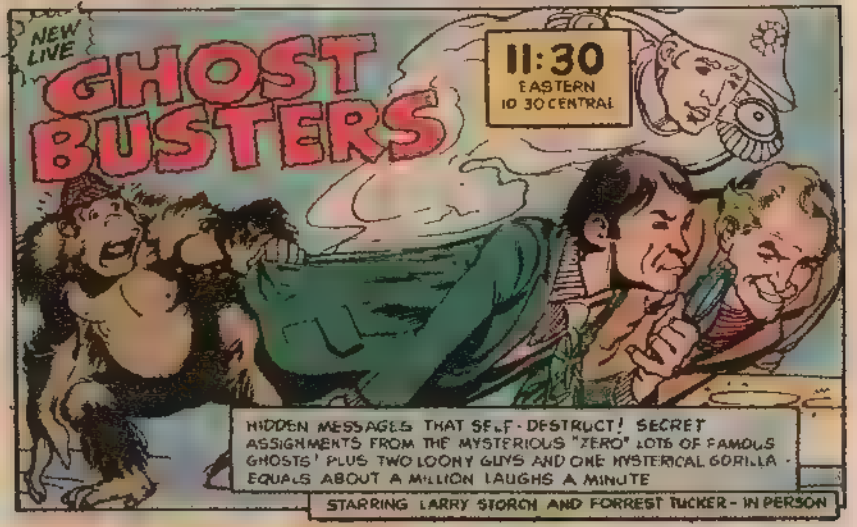
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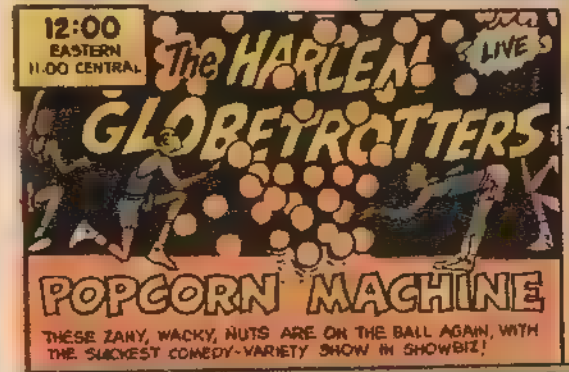
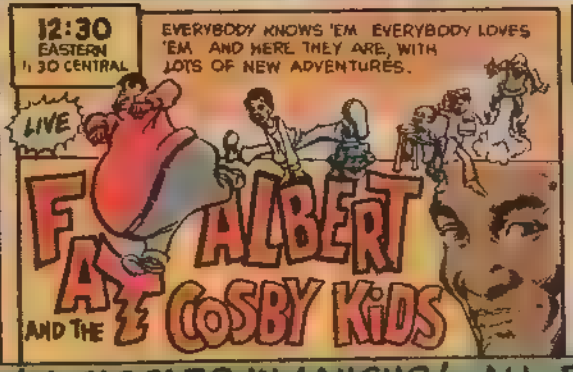
STARRING LARRY STORCH AND FORREST TUCKER - IN PERSON





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THE WORLD OF GIANT RATS

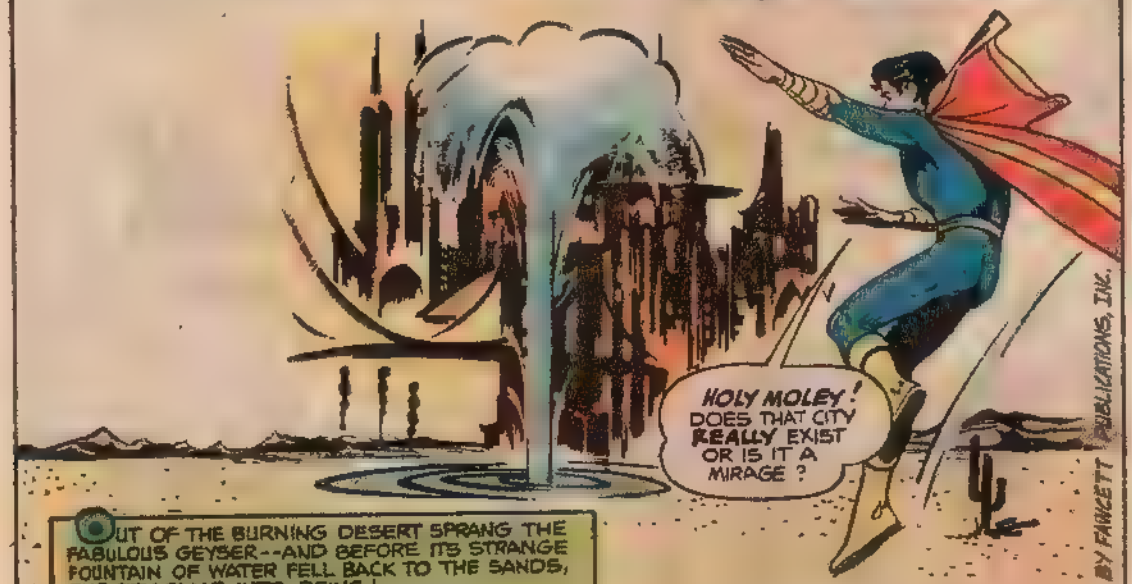
THE FLYING MAN IS A TRAITOR!
HE WOULDN'T LET US KILL OFF THE RATS! DESTROY HIM!
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE FIGHTING MY OWN FELLOW HUMANS!
POW
BUT THESE MEN ARE REALLY SAVAGES! THEY'VE GOT TO LEARN TO ACT LIKE CIVILIZED BEINGS!
BAM
LATER...
ALL THE MEN ARE YOUR CAPTIVES, MORK-EL! I CAN'T HELP FEELING A LITTLE GUILTY! BUT I KNOW YOU'LL TEACH THEM THE WAYS OF CIVIZATION AGAIN!
FROM NOW ON MY PEOPLE AND YOURS WILL LIVE IN PEACE! WE'LL SHARE THE BENEFITS OF PROGRESS AND SCIENCE!
DO NOT FEEL ASHAMED, MY FRIEND! THESE MEN ARE NOT THE TRUE DESCENDANTS OF YOUR ERA! MAN CONQUERED THE STARS, AND NOW HIS GREATNESS IS KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE!
I-I NEVER THOUGHT OF IT THAT WAY, MORK-EL! BUT YOU'RE RIGHT!
ONLY EARTH-MEN REMAINED BACKWARD AND WARLIKE! I HOPE THAT, SOON, YOU WILL HELP THEM TO REACH THE LEVEL OF OTHER MEN WHO LEFT EARTH... FOR VASTER REGIONS!
WE'LL DO OUR BEST, CAPTAIN MARVEL!
AND SO, SOMETIME LATER, WHEN CAPTAIN MARVEL RETURNS TO HIS OWN TIME...
I STOPPED WORKING ON MY TRANSUBSTANTIATOR MACHINE, BILLY! NOW I'M WORKING ON AN ELECTRONIC RAT TRAP!
I HOPE THE PROFESSOR DOESN'T SUCCEED! SOMEHOW, AFTER SEEING THE FUTURE WORLD, I'LL NEVER FEEL THE SAME ABOUT RATS AGAIN!
THE END

SHAZAM! PRESENTS

CAPTAIN MARVEL JR.

and THE CITY in the MIRAGE

THE OLD WIZARD SHAZAM HAS GIVEN CRIPPLED FREDDY FREEMAN THE POWER TO SHOUT THE NAME OF HIS HERO, CAPTAIN MARVEL, AND TURN INTO THE FAMED FLYING FOE OF EVIL... CAPT. MARVEL JR.!



OUT OF THE BURNING DESERT SPRANG THE FABULOUS GEYSER--AND BEFORE ITS STRANGE FOUNTAIN OF WATER FELL BACK TO THE SANDS, THE CITY CAME INTO BEING!

WHAT WAS ITS WEIRD, UNBELIEVABLE SECRET? CAPTAIN MARVEL JR.! THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST BOY, PENETRATES THE VEIL OF MYSTERY TO FIND EONS-OLD DANGER WITHIN!

THE CITY IN THE MIRAGE!

ART: BUD THOMPSON

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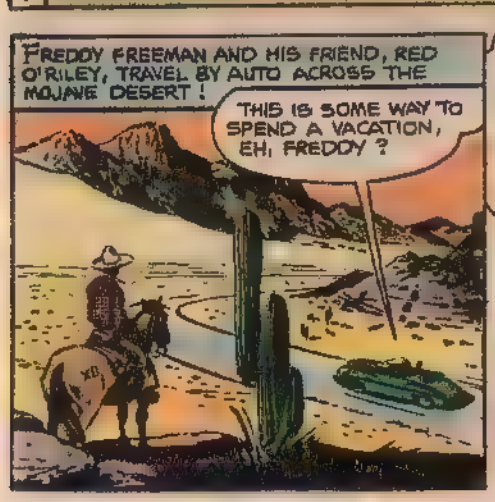
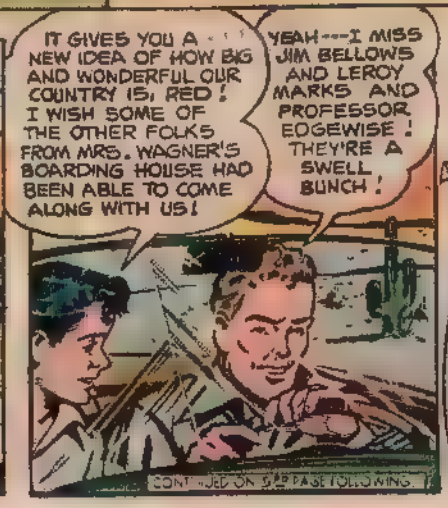

FREDDY FREEMAN AND HIS FRIEND, RED O'RILEY, TRAVEL BY AUTO ACROSS THE MOJAVE DESERT!
THIS IS SOME WAY TO SPEND A VACATION, EH, FREDDY?


IT GIVES YOU A NEW IDEA OF HOW BIG AND WONDERFUL OUR COUNTRY IS, RED! I WISH SOME OF THE OTHER FOLKS FROM MRS. WAGNER'S BOARDING HOUSE HAD BEEN ABLE TO COME ALONG WITH US!
YEAH---I MISS JIM BELLOWS AND LEROY MARKS AND PROFESSOR EDGEWISE! THEY'RE A SWELL BUNCH!
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LITTLE DO FREDDY FREEMAN AND RED O'RILEY SUSPECT AT THIS MOMENT HOW CLOSE TO DANGER THEY ARE... HOW LIKELY IT IS THAT THEY WILL NEVER SEE THEIR FRIENDS AGAIN!

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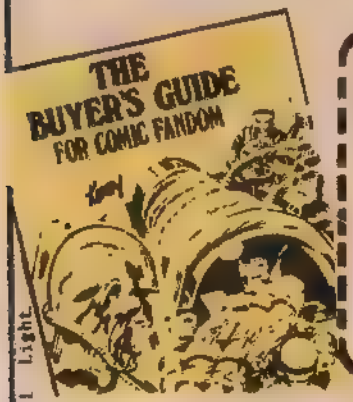

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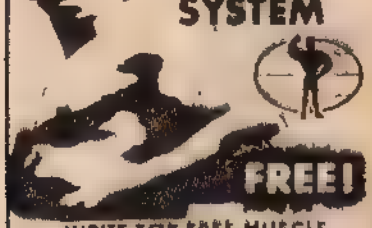

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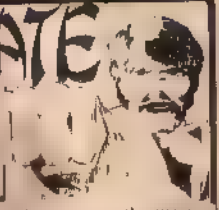

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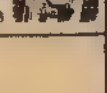

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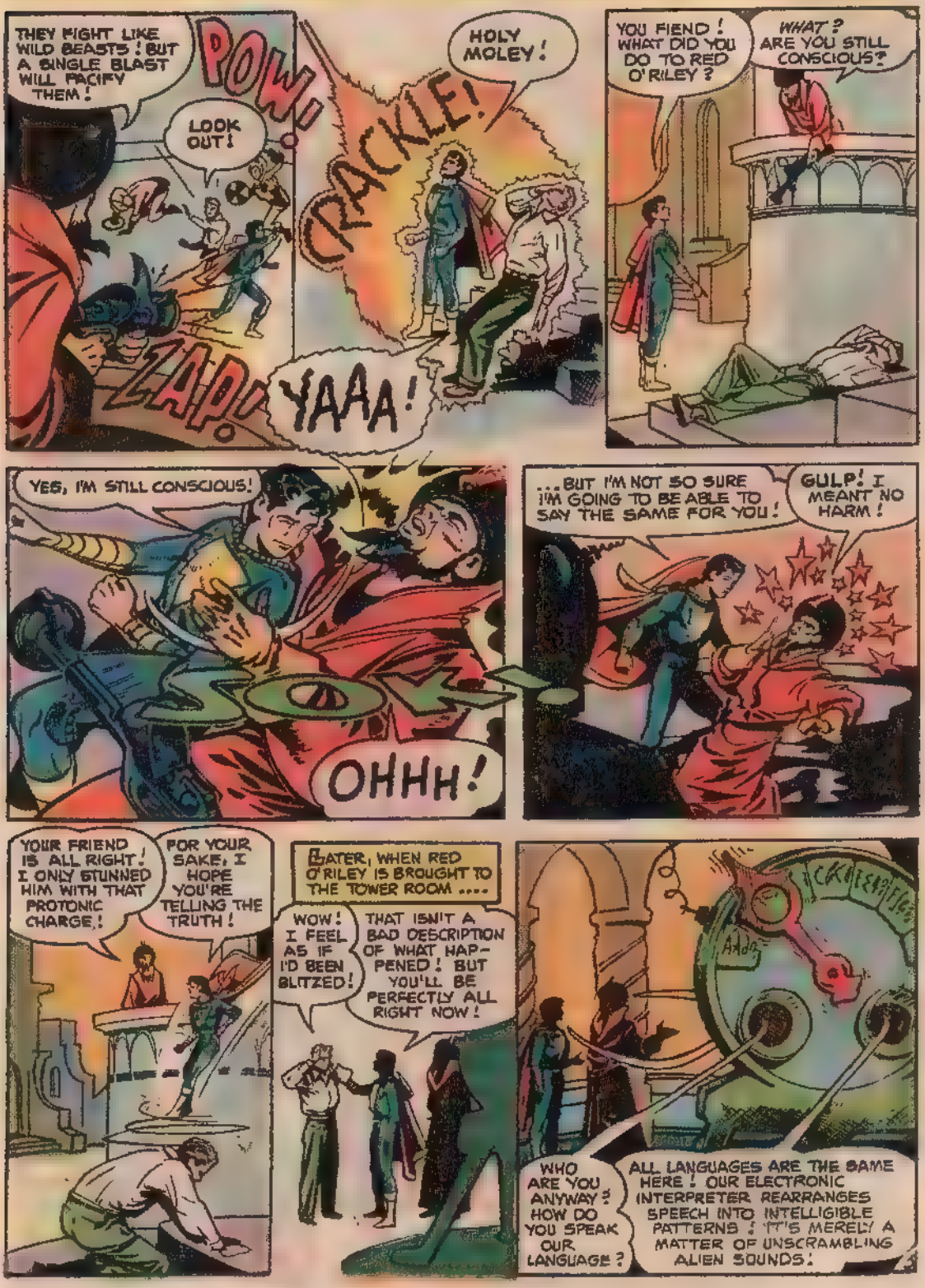
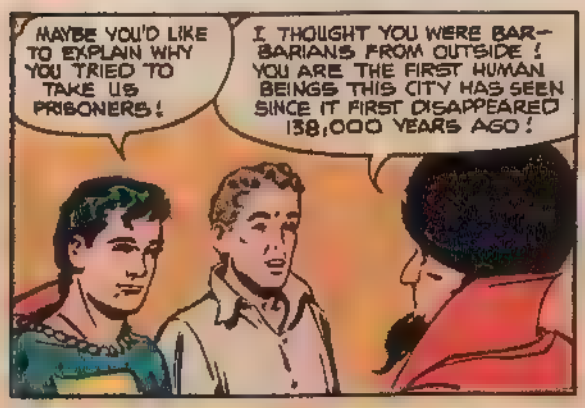
THE CITY IN THE MIRAGE

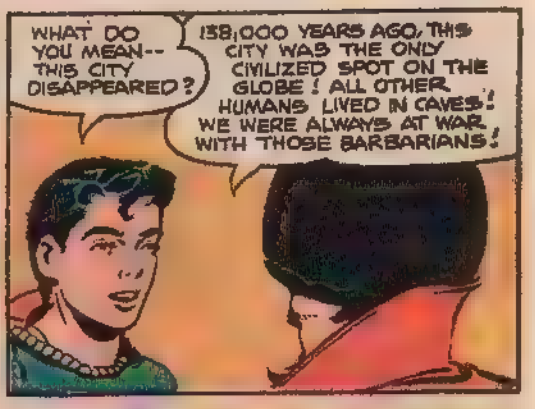
SUDDENLY...
CAPTAIN MARV... UHHHH!
HEY! IT'S A WATER GEYSER!
WHOOSH!
THE SUDDEN LURCH CRASHES FREDDY FREEMAN INTO THE DASHBOARD AND STUNS HIM BEFORE HE CAN COMPLETE THE MAGIC WORDS!
BURSTING FROM THE DESERT SANDS LIKE SOME IMPRISONED GENIE THE GIGANTIC GEYSER SPUMES FORTH ITS SPRAY! AND GRADUALLY, THE DROPLETS OF WATER SEEM TO FORM A MIRAGE---THAT GROWS BRIGHTER UNTIL IT FORMS THE UNMISTAKABLE OUTLINE OF A CITY...
...A CITY IN THE MIRAGE!
WH-WHAT HAPPENED? THIS ISN'T THE DESERT!
BUT THERE'S THE GEYSER! WE'RE STILL ON THE SAME SPOT!
THE WORLD IS STILL A DESOLATE, BARREN PLACE! EACH TIME I LOOK FROM THIS WINDOW I SEE NOTHING BUT.... HO! WHAT IS THIS?
TWO BARBARIANS IN OUR MIDST! SEIZE THEM!
UH-OH! THERE'D GOING TO BE TROUBLE!
CAPTAIN MARVEL!
?
WHEN CRIPPLED FREDDY FREEMAN SPEAKS THE NAME OF POWER, HE IS ANSWERED BY MAGIC LIGHTNING THAT CHANGES HIM INTO THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST BOY--CAPTAIN MARVEL JR.!
BOOM
TAKE IT EASY, MEN! YOU'LL LAST LONGER!
BAM!

SHAZAM!

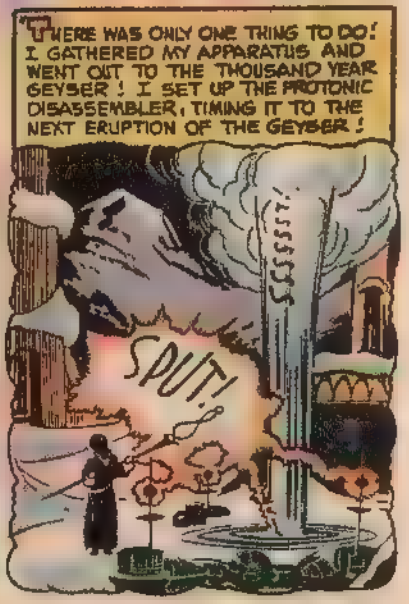

THEY FIGHT LIKE WILD BEASTS! BUT A SINGLE BLAST WILL PACIFY THEM!
POW!
LOOK OUT!
CRACKLE!
HOLY MOLEY!
ZAP!
YAAA!
YOU FIEND! WHAT DID YOU DO TO RED O'RILEY?
WHAT? ARE YOU STILL CONSCIOUS?
YES, I'M STILL CONSCIOUS!
OHHH!
...BUT I'M NOT SO SURE I'M GOING TO BE ABLE TO SAY THE SAME FOR YOU!
GULP! I MEANT NO HARM!
YOUR FRIEND IS ALL RIGHT! I ONLY STUNNED HIM WITH THAT PROTONIC CHARGE!
FOR YOUR SAKE, I HOPE YOU'RE TELLING THE TRUTH!
LATER, WHEN RED O'RILEY IS BROUGHT TO THE TOWER ROOM....
WOW! I FEEL AS IF I'D BEEN BLITZED!
THAT ISN'T A BAD DESCRIPTION OF WHAT HAPPENED! BUT YOU'LL BE PERFECTLY ALL RIGHT NOW!
WHO ARE YOU ANYWAY? HOW DO YOU SPEAK OUR LANGUAGE?
ALL LANGUAGES ARE THE SAME HERE! OUR ELECTRONIC INTERPRETER REARRANGES SPEECH INTO INTELLIGIBLE PATTERNS! IT'S MERELY A MATTER OF UNSCRAMBLING ALIEN SOUNDS!

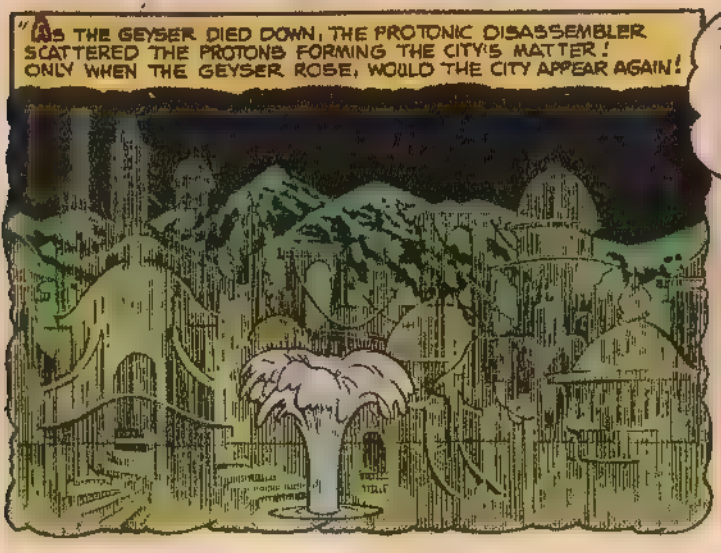
THE CITY IN THE MIRAGE


MAYBE YOU'D LIKE TO EXPLAIN WHY YOU TRIED TO TAKE US PRISONERS!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE BARBARIANS FROM OUTSIDE! YOU ARE THE FIRST HUMAN BEINGS THIS CITY HAS SEEN SINCE IT FIRST DISAPPEARED 138,000 YEARS AGO!


WHAT DO YOU MEAN-- THIS CITY DISAPPEARED?
138,000 YEARS AGO, THIS CITY WAS THE ONLY CIVILIZED SPOT ON THE GLOBE! ALL OTHER HUMANS LIVED IN CAVES! WE WERE ALWAYS AT WAR WITH THOSE BARBARIANS!

"MY ELECTRICAL WEATHER PREDICTER TOLD ME THAT THE COLD WOULD GROW CONSTANTLY WORSE, THAT THE WHOLE EARTH WOULD BE FROZEN IN AN AGE OF ICE!


"THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING TO DO! I GATHERED MY APPARATUS AND WENT OUT TO THE THOUSAND YEAR GEYSER! I SET UP THE PROTONIC DISASSEMBLER, TIMING IT TO THE NEXT ERUPTION OF THE GEYSER!
SSSSSS!
SPUT!


"AS THE GEYSER DIED DOWN, THE PROTONIC DISASSEMBLER SCATTERED THE PROTONS FORMING THE CITY'S MATTER! ONLY WHEN THE GEYSER ROSE, WOULD THE CITY APPEAR AGAIN!

THAT WAS 138,000 YEARS AGO! SINCE THEN THE CITY HAS ONLY COME INTO BEING WHEN THE GEYSER ERUPTED ---AND ONLY ENDURED FOR A DAY — AS LONG AS THE GEYSER ITSELF LASTED!
HOLY MOLEY!
4

SHAZAM!

I CAN'T MAKE HEAD OR TAIL OUT OF WHAT THE GUY'S TALKING ABOUT! IS HE CRAZY?
FAR FROM IT, RED! THESE PEOPLE ARE MUCH FURTHER ADVANCED IN KNOWLEDGE OF ELECTRICITY THAN WE ARE TODAY! HE WAS ABLE TO DE-MATERIALIZE AN ENTIRE CITY BY DISSOLVING ITS ELECTRICAL PROTONS!
ONLY FOR ONE DAY EVERY THOUSAND YEARS, WHEN THE GEYSER ERUPTS AGAIN, DOES THE CITY APPEAR! TO ITS INHABITANTS A THOUSAND YEARS IS NO MORE THAN A DAY!
TRUE! EVERY DAY I HAVE LOOKED FOR SOME SIGN OF CIVILIZATION! BUT AS THOUSANDS OF YEARS PASSED, I SAW NOTHING BUT BARREN DESERT!
THAT'S BECAUSE YOUR CITY HAPPENED TO BE BUILT ON WHAT IS NOW A DESERT!
BUT THERE IS A CIVILIZATION! THE WHOLE WORLD HAS BEEN REPOPULATED SINCE MANKIND NEARLY PERISHED IN THE ICE AGE!
HOW INTERESTING!
THEN I SHALL GO ON ...WITH MY PLANS FOR WORLD CONQUEST!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING!
CLICK!
I TURNED ON THE PROTON ATTRACTOR! YOU CANNOT MOVE! WHEN I HAVE PREPARED THE INVASION OF YOUR WORLD, I WILL RETURN TO ASK MORE QUESTIONS!
HEY! I CAN'T BUDGE AN INCH!
BZZ
ZZZ
WHAT'S HAPPENED?
DAKMORE HAS TURNED ON SOME KIND OF INCREDIBLY POWERFUL MAGNETIC DEVICE! IT'S GOT US TRAPPED!
ZZZZZZZZ
BUT THERE IS NOTHING IN THE UNIVERSE THAT CAN BIND THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST BOY!
I'VE GOT TO TURN OFF THE MACHINE SO WE CAN STOP DAKMORE!
BZZZZZZZZ

(CONTINUED ON PAGE FOLLOWING)

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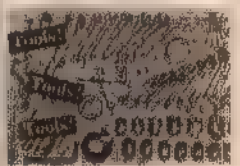

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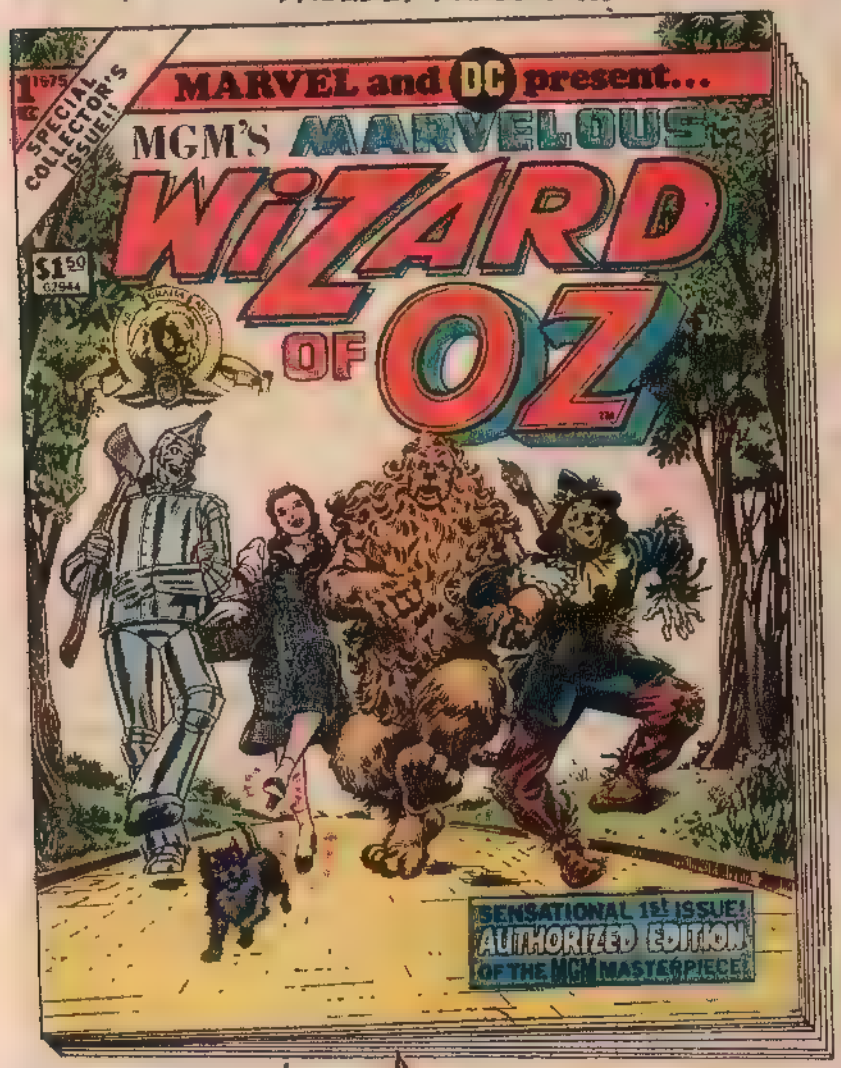

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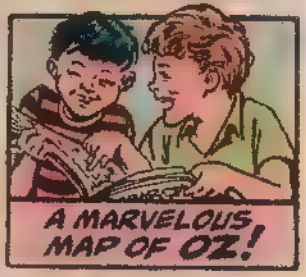

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MD-DC-5

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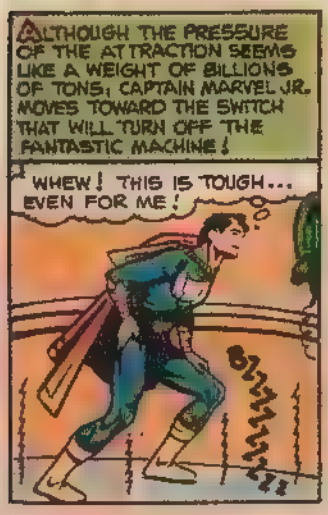
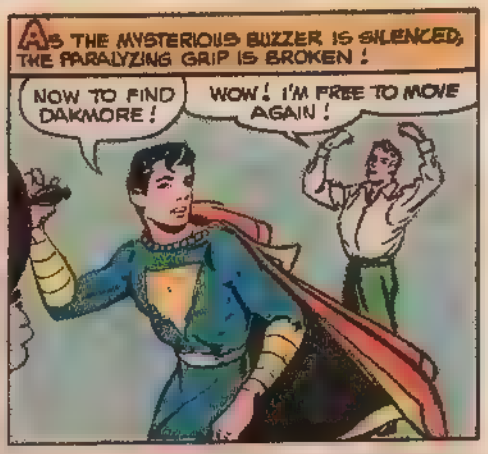
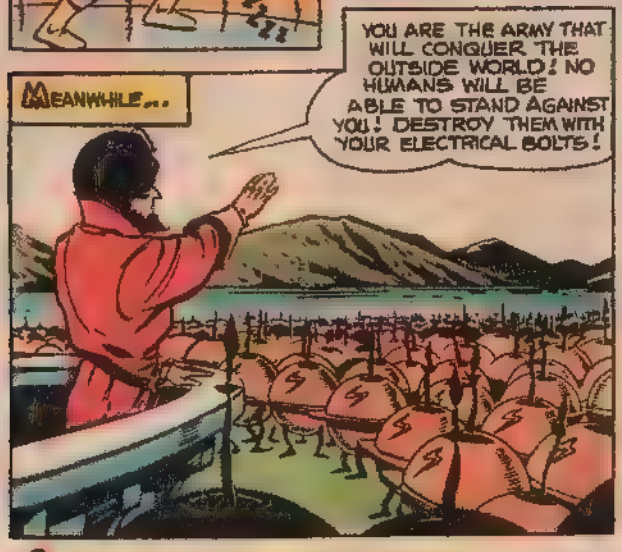
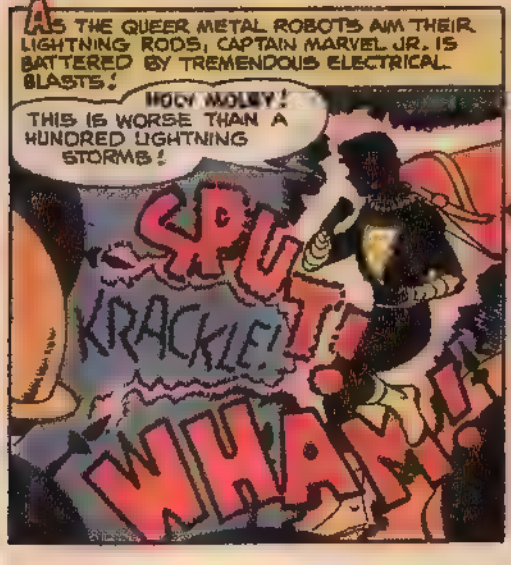
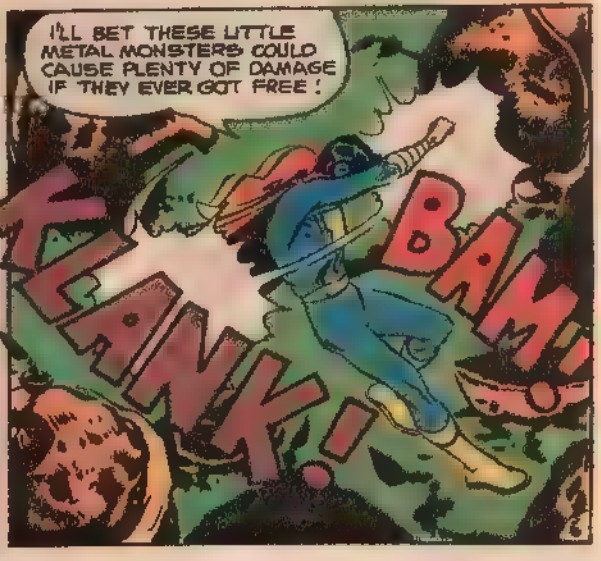
THE CITY IN THE MIRAGE


ALTHOUGH THE PRESSURE OF THE ATTRACTION SEEMS LIKE A WEIGHT OF BILLIONS OF TONS; CAPTAIN MARVEL JR. MOVES TOWARD THE SWITCH THAT WILL TURN OFF THE FANTASTIC MACHINE!
WHEW! THIS IS TOUGH... EVEN FOR ME!
BZZZZZZZZZZZ




MEANWHILE...
YOU ARE THE ARMY THAT WILL CONQUER THE OUTSIDE WORLD! NO HUMANS WILL BE ABLE TO STAND AGAINST YOU! DESTROY THEM WITH YOUR ELECTRICAL BOLTS!


AS THE QUEER METAL ROBOTS AIM THEIR LIGHTNING RODS, CAPTAIN MARVEL JR. IS BATTERED BY TREMENDOUS ELECTRICAL BLASTS!
HOLY MOLEY! THIS IS WORSE THAN A HUNDRED LIGHTNING STORMS!
SPUT!
KRACKLE!
WHAM!!



SHAZAM!

BUT THEY'RE NOT GOING TO GET FREE!
KLANG!
DAKMORE'S ROBOT ARMY IS IN RUINS! BUT I'LL WAGER HE'S GOT ANOTHER TRICK UP HIS SLEEVE!
AND CAPTAIN MARVEL JR. IS RIGHT!
DON'T COME ANY CLOSER! THIS IS A SMALL MODEL OF THE PROTON DISASSEMBLER!
JUST WHAT WILL IT DO TO ME?
IT WILL COMPLETELY DISASSEMBLE THE PROTONS OF YOUR BODY! YOU'LL VANISH FROM SIGHT! BUT, UNLIKE THE CITY, THERE WON'T BE ANY WAY TO BRING YOU BACK IN A THOUSAND YEARS!
ONLY FOR AN INSTANT DOES CAPTAIN MARVEL JR. HESITATE! THEN HE FLINGS HIMSELF FORWARD!
FOOLISH BOY! YOU SIGNED YOUR OWN DEATH WARRANT!
ZUT!
DID I?
EYAHH! Y-YOU SURVIVED!
BOP!
BUT AS THE EVIL DAKMORE FALLS-
NO! THE PROTON DISASSEMBLER! IT'S AIMED AT ME!
HOLY MOLEY! DAKMORE IS FADING AWAY--- INTO NOTHINGNESS!

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